

C O N F I D E N T I A L

OIT/TRIS

LOGGED

DO/IMS 87-354/2

6 November 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Information Technology, DA

FROM:

[REDACTED]

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Chief, Information Management Staff, DO

SUBJECT: Performance Enhancement for the Wang Alliance System

REFERENCES: A. OIT-0772-87, dtd 19 Oct 87, Same Subject  
B. DO/IMS 87-354, dtd 9 Sept 87, Same Subject

1. Action Requested Please coordinate on our proposal to proceed with the development of the Wang "Turbo" board so that we may proceed with a letter of intent to Wang.

2. As requested, my staff has provided a full briefing, keyed to the questions that you have raised in your memorandum of the 19th, for [REDACTED] of your office. Additionally, I am also providing this information in the following sub-paragraphs, keyed to the specific set of questions raised by you.

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A. Question: Will Wang announce this proposed "turbo" board as a standard product? Answer: We expect that at some point Wang will announce the availability of this product; however, it is our understanding that Wang has not yet made such a decision. There has been considerable resistance from senior Wang managers, and it is known that they will not develop the "Turbo" board without a firm commitment from the Agency.

B. Question: How do you intend to define performance based on the statement from Wang, "Wang makes no other warranties or commitments to the product performance capabilities?" Answer: We intend to define performance primarily in terms of improved system response time when executing its actions. The modifications proposed by Wang include a four-fold increase in the number of 928 links used

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to address connected peripherals and an 8 bit SCSI port which will enable the Master Unit to interface with a host of new peripherals, such as large-capacity storage devices, that it cannot now accommodate.

C. Question: Has this been coordinated with OC?  
Answer: Yes, Director of Communications and Chief Foreign Networks Division/OC have been advised of our plans in this area and were given assurances that their personnel will be provided with all that will be required for them to continue technical support. FYI: The choice of any alternative system at this time could not be supported by the existing infrastructure and would require a significant increase in personnel resources.

D. Question: In the event of product failure in the field, who is qualified to make repairs? Based on what knowledge and training? Answer: OC and OIT [redacted] will be tasked with field maintenance of the devices (which will be limited to exchanging boards or replacing CPUs via the Techreq system). Additional maintenance training will be provided if and as required. Any diagnostic and repair tools required will be procured and distributed. This will be handled in the same manner as we have with the new RSD disk drives, the Professional Computers, etc.

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F. Question: In light of the planning and directions being taken by the Office of Communications as to long-term hardware procurements and installation to overseas stations,

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does the extension of the Alliance system architecture make sense? Answer: CRAFT has a large distributed base of Wang Alliance systems, both overseas and domestically; these systems will be in place for a number of years to come. With the millions of dollars of equipment already in place we must plan for phased replacement in the future. We cannot afford to abandon this equipment arbitrarily or make a precipitous change to a totally new system. Consideration for new equipment and capabilities are being addressed under the DO's DOLPHIN program and the future direction of CRAFT must meld with that program. We cannot abandon the ever-increasing needs of DO field personnel while we wait for a yet to be defined solution which could take years to implement. Since the Wang Alliance is the current field automation base for the DO, all OC planned enhancements to the communications network should be incorporating an efficient interface between communications and existing CRAFT equipment.

G. Question: What do you expect in terms of increased product life cycle as a result of this proposed enhancement? Answer: We anticipate at minimum a five-year increase in product life cycle for all large, multi-system installed

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H. Question: There seems to be an unstated presumption that upgrading to a Wang V.S. is not an option. Answer: We have done an extensive evaluation of the VS system and discussed its utility and operation with a variety of end users as well as Wang representatives. We have determined that it is not a suitable replacement for the Wang Alliance system. Its utilization will not provide the increased processing speed required to facilitate those primary activities for which CRAFT is provided, i.e., word and document processing, storage, and manipulation. Additionally, the VS system would dramatically increase the cost of procurement, i.e., a VS CPU costs approximately ten times that of an Alliance. It is also evident that on-site (field) technical support could not be provided without the presence of a highly-qualified technician. In essence, the VS system would not provide the capabilities CRAFT needs, which will be provided by the "Turbo" board, and would place major new demands on project resources.

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3. I hope that the previous meeting between representatives of our respective staffs and this response is sufficient to resolve any lingering doubts you may have had regarding the wisdom of this project. As we need to move forward as quickly as possible, I would appreciate your releasing our contract soon.

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Attachments:  
References

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DO/IMS 87-354

9 SEP 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Information Technology  
ATTENTION: Chief, SS/ID/CSG/OIT/DA  
FROM: [REDACTED]  
Chief, Information Management Staff/DO  
SUBJECT: Performance Enhancement for the Wang Alliance System  
REFERENCE: Wang Memo, dated 26 August 1987, same subject

1. In response to a request from the [REDACTED] IMS, the Wang Corporation has proposed the development of a special "turbo" board for use with the CRAFT Alliance system. This device will significantly improve the operating speed and processing capacity of the Alliance and allow for the interface of a new series of peripherals via a SCSI port.

2. The attached proposal has been discussed with Wang representatives and IMS is prepared to make a commitment of FY-88/89 funds to cover the purchase of 100 units. Naturally, this commitment is predicated on the availability of funds and the acceptable performance of the product. We anticipate a commitment of approximately \$1,000,000 in FY-88 with the remainder coming from the FY-89 budget.

3. It is requested that your office arrange to transmit this commitment to the Wang Corporation so that development work can begin as soon as possible. Any questions or correspondence concerning this request should be directed to [REDACTED] IMS, secure [REDACTED]

Attachment: Wang Proposal

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DO/IMS 87-354/1

OIT-0772-87  
19 OCT 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, Information Management Staff, DO

FROM: Edward J. Maloney  
Director of Information Technology

SUBJECT: Performance Enhancement for the Wang Alliance System

REFERENCE: / DO/IMS 87-354, dtd 9 Sept 87, Same Subject

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Your request has raised several questions, and I apologize for not responding sooner. I believe our best course of action to support your needs for the CRAFT program requires members of our two organizations to get together and formulate answers to the following questions, then brief us on their recommendations. These questions include:

A. Will Wang announce this proposed "turbo" board as a standard product?

B. How do you intend to define performance based on the statement from Wang "Wang makes no other warranties or commitments to the product performance capabilities"?

C. Has this been coordinated with OC?

D. In the event of product failure in the field, who is qualified to make repairs? Based on what knowledge and training?

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F. In light of the planning and directions being taken by the Office of Communications as to long term hardware procurements and installation to overseas stations, does the extension of the Alliance system architecture make sense?

G. What do you expect in terms of increased product life cycle as a result of this proposed enhancement?

H. There seems to be an unstated presumption that upgrading to a Wang V.S. is not an option.

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2. Ken, I know your people view this as an interim solution until Dolphin but I view it as building bridges to the past. Our history is littered with these kinds of decisions that while well intended, resulted in being an easy target for the budgeteers. This is especially true this year when it appears we will be under considerable fiscal pressures. We can always come up with interim solutions but they are always very expensive to clean up after.

3. There are probably a few more concerns I have overlooked that I'm sure can be addressed. I have designated [redacted] Chief, Customer Service Group, as my focal point to help answer these concerns. If you agree, please have your representative contact her on secure [redacted] to get together and work on a briefing to answer these questions for both of us.

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